CLAIMS

1. A sealing material comprising a tape comprising a laminate having a height and a width and comprising a plurality of expanded porous polytetrafluoroethylene film, wherein the height of the laminate is greater than the width of the laminate.

2. A sealing material according to Claim 1, wherein said laminate has end faces along said height and the end faces are adapted to contact tightened surfaces of a vessel to be sealed.

3. A sealing material according to Claim 2, wherein an adhesive component is applied to at least one end face of said laminate.

4. A sealing material according to Claim 3, wherein release paper is applied to the adhesive component.

5. A sealing material comprising a plurality of laminates according to Claim 1,

6. A sealing material according to Claim 5, wherein said laminates have end faces along said height and an adhesive component is provided on at least one end face.

7. A sealing material according to Claim 5, wherein the laminates are joined by being thermally fused using a tetrafluoroethylene-hexafluoropropylene copolymer film or tetrafluoroethylene-perfluoroalkyl vinyl ether copolymer film.

8. A sealing material according to Claim 1, wherein at least one layer for preventing fluid penetration is interposed in the laminate.

9. A sealing material according to Claim 8, wherein the layer for preventing fluid penetration comprises a fluororesin film.

10. A sealing material according to Claim 9, wherein the fluororesin film comprises a compact polytetrafluoroethylene film.

11. A sealing material according to Claim 10, wherein the compact polytetrafluoroethylene film comprises an expanded porous polytetrafluoroethylene in which the pores have been crushed flat under pressure.

12. A sealing material according to Claim 1, wherein the laminate is adhesively unified through sintering of the expanded porous polytetrafluoroethylene films.

13. A sealing material according to Claim 1 which has been joined at the longitudinal beginning and end to form a closed ring, wherein the direction in which the laminated strips have been laminated is the radial direction of the closed ring.

14. A sealing material according to Claim 13, wherein the beginning and end are joined by adhesion with double sided adhesive tape.

15. A method for producing a sealing material in the form of tape, comprising the steps of:

laminating a predetermined number of sheets of expanded porous polytetrafluoroethylene film to produce a first laminate;

slitting the first laminate to a predetermined width to obtain laminates in the form of strips having a height and a width, said height being greater than said width, with end faces along said height; and

affixing or applying an adhesive to the end faces.

16. A method for producing a sealing material in the form of tape according to Claim 15, comprising cutting and spreading out an expanded porous polytetrafluoroethylene film laminate in the form of a cylinder which has been obtained by being wrapped around a mandrel.

17. A method for producing a sealing material according to Claim 16, wherein a fluororesin film is interposed in the first laminate.

18. A method for producing a sealing material according to Claim 17, wherein the fluororesin film comprises a compact

polytetrafluoroethylene film, said compact polytetrafluoroethylene film comprising a spirally laminated expanded porous polytetrafluoroethylene film in which the pores have been crushed flat under pressure.

19. A method for producing a sealing material according to Claim 15, comprising a step for sintering the first laminate after the step for producing the first laminate and before the step for slitting it to a predetermined width.

20. A sealing material according to claim 8 wherein said layer for preventing fluid penetration comprises an elastomer.

21. A sealing material according to claim 20 wherein said layer for preventing fluid penetration comprises Sifel®